

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DACCA 06536 300946Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00
EB-07 COME-00 XMB-02 AGRE-00 /079 W
-----301026Z 029642 /20

O R 300850Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3096
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMCONGEN HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING

S E C R E T DACCA 6536

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, BG, CH
SUBJECT: ZIA TO VISIT CHINA JANUARY 2-6

REF: DACCA 6280

1. IN ABSENCE OF AMBASSADOR FROM CITY, FOREIGN SECRETARY
TABARAK HUSAIN CALLED IN ACTING DCM DECEMBER 30 TO
INFORM HIM THAT MAJOR GENERAL ZIAUR RAHMAN, CHIEF
MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR, WOULD DEPART FROM CHINA ON
JANUARY 2 AND RETURN JANUARY 6, WITH EXPECTED SUB-
STANTIVE TALKS ON THE THREE DAYS INTERVENING. TABARAK
SAID VISIT WOULD BE PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED HERE IN TIME FOR
NEWSCASTS THIS EVENING. INDIAN ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER
DAS PRECEDED ACTING DCM INTO OFFICE. PAKISTANI HIGH
COMMISSIONER WAS NEXT IN LINE. TABARAK SAID USSR HAD
BEEN INFORMED OF VISIT DURING TRIP HERE OF SOVIET
DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FIRYUBIN LAST WEEK.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 DACCA 06536 300946Z

2. TABARAK SAID VISIT WAS ESSENTIALLY ONE OF "GOOD
WILL" AND HE WANTED TO ASSURE ACTING DCM AND HIS OTHER
CALLERS THAT NOTHING WAS CONTEMPLATED DURING TRIP WHICH
WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN
BANGLADESH AND ANY OF THE COUNTRIES WHOSE REPRESENTATIVES
WERE BEING TOLD SEPARATELY. HE SAID BANGLADESH HAS HAD

NEARLY ONE YEAR OF FORMAL RELATIONS WITH PEKING BUT THAT NO HIGH LEVEL VISITS HAVE TAKEN PLACE DURING THAT PERIOD. PRESENT JOURNEY WOULD EMPHASIZE TO CHINESE IMPORTANCE BANGLADESH PLACES ON RELATIONS WITH LARGE NEIGHBORING COUNTRY AND WOULD, BANGLADESH HOPES, LEAD TO PRACTICAL EXPRESSIONS OF THAT RELATIONSHIP.

3. ON THIS POINT, TABARAK SAID THAT BANGLADESH WOULD SIGN TRADE AGREEMENT INITIALED DURING RECENT VISIT HERE OF CHINESE TRADE DELEGATION AND WOULD DISCUSS MATTERS OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PARTICULARLY IN AREAS SUCH AS WATER MANAGEMENT WHERE CHINESE EXPERIENCE WOULD BE APPLICABLE TO BANGLADESH. TRADE AGREEMENT HE NOTED WAS SMALL BUT THAT THERE WERE POSSIBILITIES OF LATER EXPANSION.

4. TABARAK ALSO SAID THAT DEFENSE MATTERS WERE ON BANGLADESHI AGENDA. ONE SPECIFIC ITEM IS CHINESE ASSISTANCE FOR THE REACTIVATION OF THE ORDNANCE PLANT AT JOYDEVPUR (WHICH DATES FROM PAKISTAN DAYS). HE SAID BANGLADESH WOULD ALSO WISH TO RECEIVE SMALL ARMS ASSISTANCE FROM CHINA AND POSSIBLY SOME OTHER ITEMS WHICH WOULD HELP IN INTERNAL DEFENSE. HE COMMENTED THAT A MILITARY ORGANIZATION WITHOUT CAPABILITY TO CARRY OUT ITS MISSION OR TO TRAIN LOSES DISCIPLINE AND BECOMES SUBJECT TO POLITICAL AGITATORS. HE SAID THIS HAD HAPPENED IN MUJIB PERIOD AND IMPLIED IT COULD HAPPEN AGAIN.

5. TABARAK ALSO SAID THAT THE BDG HAS NO EVIDENCE THAT THE CHINESE ARE INTERFERING IN ANY WAY IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF BANGLADESH, AND CONTRASTED THIS WHICH THE ACTIONS OF THE
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SECRET

PAGE 03 DACCA 06536 300946Z

SOVIETS AND INDIANS. HE MADE THIS POINT WHILE MENTIONING THAT ONE REASON FOR THE VISIT WAS TO ANSWER INTERNAL CRITICISM FROM "PRO-PEKING LEFTISTS" THAT BANGLADESH WAS NOT PAYING SUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO RELATIONS WITH CHINA. HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THESE GROUPS LOOKED TOWARD PEKING AS AN EXAMPLE, PEKING DID NOT RECIPROCATATE WITH SUPPORT OR EVEN ENCOURAGEMENT, THE CHINESE BEING CONCERNED WITH STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS.

6. ZIA WILL BE ACCOMPANIED AMONG OTHERS BY TABARAK, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER FOR AGRICULTURE AZIZUL HAQ, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION SHAFIUL AZAM AND "A COUPLE OF ADVISERS FOR DEFENSE".

7. COMMENT: VISIT POSSIBILITY HAS BEEN IN THE PUBLIC RUMOR MILL FOR SOME TIME SINCE REFTTEL WAS SENT BUT SOME DOUBT CREPT IN AS EACH RUMORED DATE PASSED. PRESTIGE OF ZIA SHOULD BE ENHANCED BY VISIT ESPECIALLY AS WE UNDER-

STAND HE WILL BE ACCORDED HEAD OF STATE CEREMONIAL
TREATMENT OR SOMETHING CLOSE TO THAT. WHILE TABARAK'S
STATED GOALS OF THE VISIT SEEM CLEAR, WE SUSPECT
THERE MAY BE MORE EMPHASIS ON DEFENSE MATTERS THAN HE
WAS PREPARED TO DISCLOSE.
MASTERS

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NNN

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